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ABSTRACT

Ways Black Americans can ensure that their children receive a high quality education are described in this handbook. Sections concern: (1) parents as partners and advocates; (2) what parents need to know and what they can learn from neighbors and friends, the district office, the school, and the principal; and (3) actions to take in the interest of their children. Concluding remarks point out that parent involvement is a crucial element in children's success at school. Black parents have the responsibility of ensuring, through consistent monitoring and advocacy, that their children are provided every available educational opportunity. Publications of the National Black Child Development Institute and its organization are described. (RH)

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A Handbook for Black Parents

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NEGOTIATING YOUR CHILD'S EXPERIENCE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A Handbook for Black Parents

by
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FOREWORD:
Public Education and Black Children

The quality of education in America today is of concern to the nation as a whole. In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education issued a report that reflects the current status of our educational system. The report, "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform," opens with this frightening evaluation of our educational system: "If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war." In other words, if our enemies had sabotaged the education of our children to the extent we have managed **on our own**, we would be righteously outraged. Given this level of risk for *all* of America's children, one can imagine the even greater risk to Black children.

Today, in public schools across the nation, Black children are failing two to three times as often as White children. They are three times as likely as Whites to be placed in "educable mentally retarded" classes. Nearly 28 percent drop out of school, and only 20 percent of those who make it to their senior year in high school will go on to college. In some cities the dropout rate is closer to 75 percent.

Explanations for why our children are not succeeding in school include: insufficient funding, inadequate teacher training, lack of teachers, and the federal deficit. All of these problems reflect America's lack of commitment to its future, to its children. We tend to misunderstand, or to ignore, the direct relationship between education and power. For example, the Japanese have out-educated us, and, as a result, they are out-buying and out-selling us.

As we slowly begin to understand this relationship, task forces are exploring remedies for our failing educational system.

You, as a parent, can help by ensuring a quality education for your own child. Helping your child to get an education in today's public school system can be one of the most challenging, time-consuming and important jobs you will ever undertake. However, the reward—though long in coming—may be one of the greatest you will ever receive.

Evelyn K. Moore
Executive Director
National Black Child Development Institute

I. Parents As Partners and Advocates

Preparation for the Challenge: Your Role and Responsibilities as a Parent

You, as parent or guardian, know more about your child than anyone else. The challenge is for you to accept this fact and the accompanying responsibility for your child's education—from the time he enters kindergarten to his graduation from high school. This commitment also implies that you will support your child and be his constant and most formidable ally and advocate. Don't go into it with the expectation that your child's education and your own involvement in the process are the system's first priority; the system's commitment to the education of your child will never match your own.

All too often we parents take the public education system for granted. When our children enter into the system we rarely know in advance to what and whom they will be exposed. Most of us don't perceive school as a place and process upon which we can have an impact. Many of us are also unaware of the options existing within the public education system itself. We just do what we're supposed to do: register and send our children to school.

Why do we do this? If you think about your child in an unfamiliar setting among strangers, it is not unusual to become anxious about what she may be feeling (lonely, confused by expectations for performance), about what might be happening to her (hit by a bully, feelings hurt, bathroom needs perhaps being ignored by the teacher, inability to make friends quickly), and about her physical safety in getting to and from school. Nevertheless, you send your child off to school and hope she is okay. You intend to check up on how it's going—with your child, with the school—but often this takes a back seat to other priorities. The year slips away and your child seems okay,

but if you haven't been involved, you really can't know for certain. All too often, things are indeed not okay for Black children in the public schools.

Of course we all want to change this situation, and we can. There are ways in which you can ensure your child receives a quality public school experience. What follows are steps you can take to begin this process.

Photo Credit: Marquetta Tisdell

II. Research: What You Need to Know and Where to Find the Information

Before School Begins: Know Your Child

You have spent more time with your child than anyone else. As a result, you have a great deal of information about his level of development and life experiences. To see just how much you know about your child, answer the following questions.

- Who is this person? What is he like?
- How does he behave and get along with others—adults and children?
- What do adults and children like or dislike about your child? What do you like or dislike about him?

The answers to these questions will give you a good idea of what type of relationships your child is likely to foster in school. They may also pinpoint areas which you will want to address *before* your child heads out the door for his first day. For example, if your child is impatient, you may need to work on teaching him how to wait for what he wants. In addition, think about the following:

- What is the child's general disposition—happy or unhappy, tense or relaxed, aggressive or unassertive?
- How does he feel about himself? How does he feel about his skills and limitations?

At the minimum, your child should feel good about himself. This includes knowing that he is valued for being a unique and special person, and having a sense of competency, mastery and control over his environment to the extent that he is able to get his basic physical, social and emotional needs met. Look for evidence of pride. If you see evidence of guilt or shame instead, this is a signal that your child will need extra help to succeed in school.

- How does he handle his emotions? (What does he do in anger, frustration, uncertainty, or in situations which seem to overwhelm him?) How does he express pleasure?
- How well does he control himself? (Is he spontaneous, inhibited, impulsive?)

Most children act spontaneously—they have not learned to think through their actions at this early age. While some children seem naturally outgoing, others are shy and reserved. If your child is too aggressive or has trouble keeping himself under control, he may run into problems with his teacher, as well as his peers. On the other hand, if your child is extremely shy, you may want to work together on helping him to meet new people (children and adults) so he won't be afraid when it is time to go to school.

- To what extent is he curious, imaginative, self-starting? (Does he have original ideas and ask lots of questions, or is he likely to repeat the same idea over and over?)
- Does he attempt to problem-solve or does he give up easily and ask for help? Does he like to try new things?

Children are naturally curious. According to Dr. Wendell Cox, a noted authority on Black children, "nothing is more basic to the development of a child's mind than pure, uncontaminated curiosity." As children age, their ability to problem-solve becomes a critical element in school success. Ultimately, problem-solving is a requirement for countless job opportunities.

- What makes your child special and unique? (Does he talk a lot? Is he good at getting attention without annoying the person who is responding to him? Can

he share, play cooperatively, wait his turn, play alone, stick with a task?)

- How capable is your child? (Can he walk, jump, run, talk, listen, follow directions? Is he potty-trained, a good eater, able to dress and undress himself?)

Every child has different strengths and weaknesses. Whatever your child's special talents, he should be taught to like himself for who he is. Some children develop more quickly than others, and that too is perfectly natural. Keep all of your observations and assessments of your child in mind as you prepare for his entry into public school; you will have much use for this information later on.

Your Child's Current Preschool Environment

If your child is in preschool, it is important that you know what goes on in her current environment so that you can make comparisons between this experience and the public school setting you will observe before your child enters kindergarten. In observing your child in preschool, you might want to ask:

- How many adults and how many children are in this setting? Are there enough adults to meet the needs of all the children?

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) recommends that with a group of 16 three-year-old children, the staff-child ratio not exceed one to seven. Similarly, with a group of 16 four-year-olds, the staff-child ratio should not exceed one to eight.

- Is play a large part of the children's daily routine?
- Are children expected to learn colors, numbers, the alphabet, to read and do arithmetic?

Professional early childhood educators view play as children's work. Through play and a warm, supportive environment, children come to understand the world.

Reading, writing and computation are not the work of preschoolers. On the other hand, public school kindergartens expect children to know their colors, alphabet and numbers to twenty, and to have mastered basic social skills such as waiting one's turn, sitting still and cooperating. These are all lessons that can be learned informally at home and at preschool.

Now, take a look at the preschool classroom:

- What forms of discipline are used?
- What are teachers' expectations of and attitudes toward children, and your child in particular?

With regard to discipline, corporal punishment should not be allowed in the classroom, nor should teachers verbally abuse the children by using harsh language or threats. Children's interests and special abilities should be accepted and appreciated. Staff should genuinely like and appreciate your child; they should see her as competent, capable, and successful.

Finally, ask yourself: Does your child like this setting, the adults and other children? Look for tell-tale signs: Is she cooperative? Does she look forward to going each day? Answers to these questions will indicate whether or not she is having a good experience.

Additional Investigating

Check with your friends and neighbors to find out more about the public school's reputation in the area. Questions might include:

- What do they know (or have they heard) about the school system in general and about your child's assigned school in particular?
- Do they know other children who attend the public schools or your child's assigned school? If so, what

can they tell you about the children's experiences there?

- Do they know the principal or any of the teachers and staff members who could provide you with information about the school? (Conversations with school personnel are often more open when they happen outside of the school setting.)

Ask the children who attend the school to tell you about their school, teachers, principal, work, friends—about who and what they like and dislike, and why. If your child attends a neighborhood preschool, ask the teachers and parents there about the public schools.

The District Office

It is best to start with a phone call to the district office (available from the phone book or directory information) to obtain information about the following:

- What papers will you need to enroll your child in school? (Schools often require a birth certificate, immunization records, and/or proof of residence.)
- What is the name, address and phone number of your child's assigned school, and how will he be transported to and from school? What is the principal's name?
- What is the school schedule? At what time do classes begin and end? What are the holidays? (You will need this information to plan your visit to the school.)

The School

It is important and useful to gather information about the public school your child will be attending from various sources, and to begin your research well in advance of the first day of school.

Public schools are owned by you, the taxpayer, and they are open to you during regular school hours. Visit the school in the spring, before classes recess for the summer. Call to make an appointment, and ask if the school can arrange an interview and time for observations. Letting the teachers plan for your visit minimizes the disruption to their classes. Also, try to make an appointment with the principal so you are assured enough time to discuss everything you want to know.

When you arrive, go first to the main office to let the school know you are there and why (for the safety of the children, they don't want people to just wander around). They will issue you a visitor's pass to carry with you so that you won't have to explain yourself to every adult you encounter. If you prefer, they may have a staff person available to give you a tour.

If you are questioned about the intent or purpose of your visit, you might say, "My child will be attending (kindergarten, first grade, sixth grade) in the fall. I would like to meet the principal and the teachers who teach that grade, and I would like to observe some classes." If you have any problems in attempting to visit and observe the school, call the Superintendent's office, explain your problem and ask for assistance.

Interview the Principal

During your interview with the principal be certain to obtain answers to as many of your questions as possible. Take a list of questions with you, as well as note paper and a pen; that way you won't forget to ask anything, you will have a written record to refresh your memory later, and you will impress the principal with the seriousness of your interest in your child's education. The purpose of this interview with the principal is to collect information

about the school as an organization, its successes in general and with Black children in particular, and about the principal herself—who she is as a person, and how she functions as the head of your child's future school. Questions you might ask about the school include:

- When was the school built and who is it named after? (An icebreaker.)
- How many grades does it include, how many children attend?
- How many children are in a classroom? (One teacher for every 15 to 25 children in kindergarten through grade six is the average. Generally, the smaller the teacher-child ratio, the better.)

Photo Credit: Phillip W. Schoultz, Jr.

- How are children assigned to classroom teachers? (If you have a preference, can you get your child in a particular teacher's class?)
- What is the organizational structure: Does the school have a principal, several teachers, a resource teacher, a library, good outdoor equipment and eating facilities?
- If both White and Black children attend, are Black children's academic achievements comparable to those of White children? Ask about the proportion of Black to White children in special education, detention and gifted classes. Are Black children over- or under-represented in any of these classes?
- Are there both Black and White teachers in the school? What kinds of classes are they teaching?

If there are racial differences in placements and/or academic achievement levels, find out why and what specific measures are being taken to eliminate these differences. The staff of public schools should include teachers who come from the community and who are racially and ethnically representative of the community. If that is not the case, find out why not and what the school intends to do to correct this problem. Our children need role models who look like them and/or their parents.

Now, with regard to your child's curriculum, you may ask:

- What does the curriculum include about Black history and the contributions of Black Americans?
- What textbooks are used, and are the contributions of *all* Americans included in these textbooks?
- Does the school recognize and/or celebrate Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, Black History Month, and other related holidays?

Children's curriculum should include materials which help them to explore the history and contributions of peoples of various cultures, especially those represented in the classroom, school and/or neighborhood. Learning about Black culture should be an important part of the classroom experience for children of all races and nationalities. Teaching children at a young age to be culturally sensitive helps to dispel ignorance and racial prejudice before they become so entrenched.

- Who selects the books used by the district? Do parents participate in this process?

It is critical that parents play a role in the education of their children. The school should have groups and activities specifically for parents, such as the PTA, parent-teacher nights, pot-luck suppers, and so on. Parents should be very involved in the education process and take responsibility for their children's educational environment and achievement. Ideally, parental influence should extend to what is taught in the classroom. Black parents should ensure that books and other learning materials used in school include positive Black representation.

You should feel free to inquire about the principal herself. Questions you might ask include:

- What has been your educational experience? Did you teach, and if so, what age group?
- What are your qualifications, degrees, credentials? (You'd ask your doctor or lawyer, wouldn't you?)
- What are your expectations of and approaches to teaching children? (Are children valued and given respect?)
- What do you view as your primary objectives, and how are these achieved?

- What rules do children need to obey? What is the best way of dealing with their mistakes and misbehavior? (Some schools continue to administer corporal punishment with parents' permission.)

A qualified public school principal will have at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university as well as public school teaching and administrative experience. A good principal will be approachable and easy to talk to. She will answer all of your questions and/or follow up on them with a phone call. She will understand that children learn best in an environment in which they are valued and respected. She will respect children and expect them to respect her and cooperate with her, with their teachers and other staff members, and with their classmates. Ideally, she will have taught children of this age and grade level, and she may occasionally take over a class for a teacher. She will be in the classrooms often, and the teachers will be comfortable during these visits.

- What can you tell me about your teachers? What do you expect of them and how close do they come to meeting your expectations?

The principal should view her teaching staff as partners rather than simply as employees. She will be supportive of her teachers and take pride in their performance. Ask about the ways in which she supports her teachers.

Interview the Teachers

Use the same questions you asked the principal to find out from the teacher:

- What has been your teaching experience? Your educational experience?
- What do you expect of the children? (Does he have high or low expectations for Black children?) What do you expect of parents?

- What is the relationship between the teaching staff and the principal here? (Does he see himself as part of "the team?" Is his opinion consistent with that expressed by the principal?)
- How would you describe the school environment?
- What do you do in your classroom to make sure that children respect and are exposed to the contributions of all cultures?

You can use the same guidelines that you have used previously to evaluate the teacher's responses: is he generally positive, enthusiastic about teaching, and sensitive to the special needs of Black children?

Observe the Classrooms

Visit at least one classroom, allowing at least 45 minutes per visit. Watch, listen and formulate questions to be asked later to clarify your observations. While you are observing, ask yourself:

- Is the teacher able to manage the children comfortably, or is he rigid and inflexible?
- Does the teacher favor some children and ignore others? Do some children have problems with the teacher? How do these children behave? (Do any of the problem children behave like your child?)
- Does the teacher embarrass the children or hurt their feelings? Does he compare them with each other?
- How are the children disciplined? Does it seem fair to you? (How would your child respond?)

A good teacher is very similar to a good principal. A qualified teacher will have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and public school teaching experience. In addition, he will encourage the children in an appropriately warm and supportive fashion, and provide praise and recognition for their achievements rather

than negative feedback. He should appear to like and enjoy children, have a sense of humor and be flexible.

- Is he sensitive to and respectful of children's individual needs, abilities, personalities? Are they praised?
- Do his expectations of the children seem appropriate to their ages and abilities, or are they expected to all behave the same, sit still all the time, always raise their hands to be recognized, and maintain eye contact?
- Are most of the children able to meet the teacher's expectations? What happens to those who don't meet expectations?
- Do any of the children appear threatened when called on? Does it seem that only some of the children react this way (i.e., is there a difference between the reactions of boys and girls, Black and White students, etc.?)

A good teacher will know all of the children and be responsive to their individual differences, abilities, interests and staminas. He will relate to every child in a way that shows acceptance and respect. His students should appear comfortable and happy. If a child provides a wrong answer, it should be treated as a normal part of the learning process and she should be encouraged to try again.

- How do *you* feel about this teacher? Do you like or dislike him? Does he make you feel comfortable and respected?
- Does he take time to welcome you and introduce you to the class, explain briefly what activities are going on, encourage you to ask questions, make himself available later to answer them?
- Will your child like him, want to cooperate, learn?

When your child is in his class, a good teacher will maintain regular contact with you, providing updates on your child's successes and needs for improvement. He will also expect you, as his partner in your child's education, to do the same for him—keeping him apprised of what's happening at home and in the community. He will emphasize descriptive comments rather than grades in his reports on your child's progress. As part of his curriculum, a good teacher will also provide the children with information about the contributions of various cultural groups, especially those represented in his classroom.

It is worth noting that if you have a good principal you will usually have good teachers. However, a good teacher can be found in a school whose principal is unsatisfactory.

After you have completed your observations and interviews, express your appreciation to the children as well as the teachers and principal, and especially to the office staff (who will be of great help to you during the school year if you need to contact your child, obtain information or make special arrangements).

It is important to remember that you don't have to do all this alone. You can take a friend or even have someone else go in your place—as your representative or as a Black child advocate. Or, if you are unable to observe a classroom in session, a visit to the school during lunch time, a PTA meeting, or a review of the school's newsletter will also give you valuable information about the school. However you accomplish your research, its value to you and your child will be immeasurable. The school staff will know that you're serious about and committed to your child's education, and that you will hold them (as well as yourself) accountable. When your child enters school in the fall, you will have plenty of opportunities to remind them of your commitment.

Photo Credit: Cleo Freelance Photo

III. Analysis of Your Research: What to Do with What You've Learned

After you've gathered all of this information, think about what you've seen, heard and felt about the school, its program and staff:

- Do you like and respect the principal, teachers, staff? Do they seem to know what they're doing?
- Do they like children, and are they committed to children's development?
- Can you work with them, and they with you?
- Is this a good place for your child to be? (Will your child feel good about herself there? Will she succeed there?)
- Is there a particular teacher who is your favorite? Can your child be in this teacher's class?

When you decide that a school is the right place for you, it is time to start preparing the school for your child, and vice versa. Parents can usually arrange for their children to be enrolled in the school of their choice, depending upon the flexibility of district office and individual school policies. If, during your investigations, you have heard of or met a teacher who you think is well suited to teach your child, you may even be able to get your child into that particular classroom. (Or, after your child has attended the school for a year and you have had a chance to participate in meetings, you may have a better chance to request and get a particular teacher for your child.) In a personal conversation with the principal of your chosen school, state your reasons for choosing the teacher for your child; your request will likely be granted. Be sure to make your request before the school year ends, however, as students are assigned to next year's classes in the spring or early summer.

Prepare Your Child for the School

Talk to your child about school. Tell him what to expect, and maybe even arrange for him to visit the school with you before the first day. If you take him to meet his teacher and see his classroom before school ends in the spring, you will need to remind him of the visit over the summer months, as young children often have a short memory for details.

Help your child remember the rules he will have to follow and what will be expected of him. Make sure he knows how to communicate his name, address and phone number; try to incorporate informal lessons on colors, numbers to 20, and the alphabet into your daily routine. Remember that the situation will be new to your child, and he will need your assistance and support in preparing for and adjusting to it. Help your child to understand that he must cooperate with the teacher without giving the impression that he is to do "whatever the teacher says" regardless of the circumstances; he should always feel he has a resource (you) to go to if he has questions. (If a child is taught to obey all adults without question, he will believe he is of little value if a teacher is prejudiced against him. Also, child abuse can go unnoticed in the case of a child who is led to believe he must obey all adults.)

Use examples of your child's current behavioral routine to illustrate changes he needs to make when he begins school. If he speaks when others are speaking, remind him that in school the teacher will not like it when he "interrupts." Explain that in school he will usually have to raise his hand when he wants to speak, and help him practice waiting until others have finished speaking.

We enjoy and praise our children's activeness and physical skills, but we need to let them know when they

can and cannot be active. Help your child to sit still for short periods of time, and gradually encourage him to extend that ability for longer periods. (School-scheduled breaks for children are designed to coincide with their ability to sit still and pay attention. Your visit to the classroom will have given you information about how long these periods are and what is expected of children. Use your research as a guide in preparing your child for the school setting, or consult the parent of a child who is already in school.)

Helping your child to become familiar with the trip to and from both school and after-school care is also useful for him. The fewer unknowns he has to worry about, the more calm and comfortable he will be about school.

Photo Credit: Phillip W. Schoultz, Jr.

When school begins it is wonderful for your child if you or someone he knows can accompany him on the first day and remain with him until he has settled in (this is reassuring for your child and impressive to the teacher). If this is impossible, then prepare him with all the information you have—the name of his teacher, what she looks like, and where he should go when he gets there.

Supporting and Sustaining Your Child in School

Keeping up with what your child is doing and how she is getting along in public school requires that you visit the school on a regular basis (or send someone you trust). Too often we don't hear about what's going on until there is already a problem, and then when you visit the school you are put on the defensive.

Check with your child and the school. It is important that you ask every day how your child's day was; you can help her to recall by asking questions about other children, class activities, play activities. Call the teacher periodically, even if you don't have specific questions or concerns. (Leave a message in the office and the teacher will return your call—usually during lunch or after school; if not, call back.) Go to parent-teacher conferences. If you cannot go to the school, the teacher may be able to come to your house. If the teacher refuses to make such arrangements, call the principal and explain the situation.

IV. Conclusion

Every child in our society must attend school; it is the law. Public funds are allocated for public education systems so that all of our children may be provided with an education that enables them to become self-reliant, competent, productive and contributing citizens. However, our educational systems cannot and do not effectively carry out this mission without the support of the communities they serve. Schools which must operate in an unsupportive community environment seldom have the records of success found in schools with active parent and community involvement. Similarly, children who move through the educational system without the support of their parents or guardians seldom realize the levels of success (in school, and later in society) attained by children who receive such support. Parent involvement is a critical element in a child's successful educational experience.

We as Black parents have the responsibility of ensuring, through consistent monitoring and advocacy, that our children are provided every educational opportunity available. Every Black child is entitled to and deserves the best education possible, and every Black parent owes his child this commitment.

Publications of the National Black Child Development Institute

NEW!

Keeping Your Baby Healthy: A Practical Manual for Black Parents. The birth of a baby is a joyous occasion, but one that takes literally months of planning. This manual, complete with easy to read charts and graphs, focuses on the nine months of pregnancy and a baby's first year of life. Ideal for young and/or first-time parents. 38 pages. $8.00 each.

Child Care Selection Checklist: A Guide for Parents. As the debate rages about what a 'good' early childhood program should look like, Black parents look to NBCDI for guidance in selecting an appropriate program. This practical checklist shares with parents the questions and concerns they should consider before placement to ensure that their child's early childhood program will offer a quality experience. 12 pages. 1988. $3.00 each.

Giving Your Child a Good Start in School. Beginning school is often a time of excitement and anxiety—for both children and parents. This guide walks parents through at-home activities which will prepare their children for school-room experiences. The manual also offers parents guidance on how to select a quality program that will foster their child's growth. 12 pages. 1988. $4.50 each.

Teens, Television and Telephones: A Survival Guide for Parents. All parents tend to worry when their teens become absorbed in watching television and talking on the telephone with friends. This practical guide helps parents understand how to monitor their teens to ensure that these activities, which can promote learning, trust and growth, don't become detrimental. 16 pages. 1988. $4.00 each.

ALSO AVAILABLE:

Safeguards: Guidelines for Establishing Child Development Programs for Four Year Olds in the Public Schools. As public schools become a major provider of child care for four-year-olds, large numbers of Black families will rely on these programs. This highly acclaimed report offers ten detailed recommendations for parents, administrators, and advocates to ensure that early childhood programs in the public schools create a learning environment for Black children which is safe, developmentally appropriate, and culturally sensitive. 21 pages with bibliography. 1987. $6.00 each.

Child Care in the Public Schools: Incubator for Inequality? The national trend toward placing child care programs in the public schools is of special concern to the Black community because large numbers of Black families are using these programs. This report includes an analysis of the potential impact of this trend on Black children. 28 pages with bibliography. 1986. $7.50 each.

Diversity: An Approach to Child Care Delivery. The child care system in the State of California is an example of how diversity can work to the advantage of children, parents and the provider community. This report, written by Dr. Karen Hill-Scott, provides an overview of the national child care delivery system and explores diversity as it relates to arrangement, type of provider, program and delivery system, and the children who are served. The positive outcomes—and possible problems—of child care conceptualized around the idea of diversity are discussed. 10 pages. 1986. $3.50 each.

Guidelines for Adoption Service to Black Families and Children. Too often, one of the primary barriers to the adoption of Black children is the clash between the prospective adoptive family and the adoption agency. The unfortunate result is that a disproportionate number of Black children languish in foster care. This report provides

alternatives to policies and practices which serve to "screen out" Black adoptive families. 19 pages. 1987. $3.75 each.

Beyond the Stereotypes: A Guide To Resources for Black Girls and Young Women. This resource guide details criteria for selecting culturally relevant, nonstereotypical, and motivational materials for Black girls. Also included are strategies for improving the quality of materials to which Black girls are exposed. Annotated bibliographies of selected books, records and films appropriate for Black girls ages three to seven, eight to eleven, twelve to fifteen and sixteen and older, are provided. Retailers and distributors from which these materials can be purchased or rented are identified. 75 pages. 1986. $8.50 each.

PERIODICALS/OTHER MATERIALS

Special Report: The Status of Black Children. A special report which touches upon the present circumstances of Black children in America. 12 pages. 1989. $3.00 each.

The Black Child Advocate. This quarterly newsletter provides public policy and legislative updates, reports on NBCDI's local service programs for Black children, current issues reports, and more. 8 pages. Quarterly. $12.50 per year.

Child Health Talk. Focusing on health issues facing Black children, this quarterly newsletter provides practical information and guidance for parents. Topics such as nutrition, exercise, childhood stress, health care, dental checkups, behavioral disturbances, and speech and vision problems are discussed. 8 pages. Quarterly. $4.00 per year.

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